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### Living Bicentennial Floral Designs

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# Living Bicentennial Floral Designs

## South Dakota 1976



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Cooperative Extension Service  
South Dakota State University  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

# Living Bicentennial Floral Designs

By

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Planting floral emblem displays offers a unique, colorful and meaningful way for you to participate in the Bicentennial celebration of our nation's 200th birthday in 1976.

Red, white and blue flowers may be used in many ways as special Bicentennial displays. Yellow or gold flowers make excellent borders for plant beds.

Suggestions and guidelines for planting designs as well as types of flowers best for use in South Dakota are described in this publication. Flowers can be used in many ways for displays other than those discussed here. Individuals or organizations are urged to use imagination and ingenuity. And once you have those colorful beds growing in full bloom, remember to record them with your camera! Sizes and measurements provided here are guidelines only. These may be altered by scaling for larger or smaller plantings.

## Types of Plants to Use

In most cases, low growing plants such as red, white or blue multiflora or grandiflora petunias are good for floral ground beds. Multiflora petunias have smaller flowers than grandiflora petunias but the flowers are more abundant and give nice mass color; therefore, they are recommended over the grandiflora petunias for floral emblem displays. Red and white geraniums as well as petunias are good annual plants for pots, hanging baskets, patio containers and flower boxes for splashes of color. Other low-growing plants which could be used for floral emblem displays include: blue—ageratum, sweet alyssum and verbenas; white—annual phlox, sweet alyssum and verbenas; and red—china pinks, annual phlox and verbenas. These plants could be used in combinations to carry out the three-color theme.

Annual flowers that have been started in the greenhouse and are near the blooming stage are ideal for use in floral displays. You should make arrangements early with your local greenhouse operator for the transplants you will need to carry out your floral emblem plans.

## Soil Preparation

Good results in growing annuals depends greatly on thorough preparation of the soil where the plants are to be grown. When growing annuals in ground beds, the soil should be prepared to a depth of 6-8 inches. Materials such as sphagnum peat moss, leaf mold, compost and well-rotted manure can be spaded or forked into the existing soil bed before planting to improve aeration and drainage. Applica-

## Care Required for Floral Display

It takes more than just planting the selected floral design. Watering, trimming, weeding must continue throughout the growing season to maintain the nice, neat appearance of your planting.

Individuals, groups, clubs or private and public officials may want to develop local participation in the Bicentennial observance through use of these floral displays. Because of the extra work and expense for maintenance, individuals or organizations may want to work together on a project. Perhaps sponsors might be obtained to provide financial support for establishing and keeping the display neat.

tion rates vary with the type of soil you have, but in general you can work 2 to 4 inches of organic matter into the top 6 to 8 inches of the planting area and get good results. Also as the soil is being prepared be certain to work some fertilizer into the soil, using a complete fertilizer such as 6-12-6, 10-6-4 or 12-12-12 and apply at the rate of 1 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet of floral bed area.

## Formal Flower Beds

Formal flower beds may be designed in any size, shape or form including squares, rectangles, strips, circles or stars. The easiest way is to design the bed on graph paper using a scale of 1 inch on the paper to equal 12 inches (1 foot) on the actual design. This size scale makes it easier to calculate the number of red, white and blue and possibly yellow flowers you would need to complete the project. Perhaps the idea of spelling out "HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA" or "SPIRIT OF '76" may appeal to you. You can estimate the approximate number of plants needed by making a plot plan for the size of floral emblem you wish to plant and figuring the number of square inches one plant would occupy in the floral display. Divide the total area in square inches by the area one plant covers in square inches to determine the number of plants needed.

## Container Plantings

In small containers, you might want to use the three-color idea (one plant per pot) in a group arrangement of pots. In larger pots you would have room for one plant each of the three different colors.

For hanging baskets, which are becoming quite popular again, you could use a combination of red, white and blue flowers. Perhaps a "Bicentennial Hanging Flower Basket" could become a major display theme for your community.

Larger flower boxes allow for the use of more plants. Many interesting combinations of red, white and blue flowers can be worked out.

## American Flag Floral Design

Dimensions of the flag are roughly twice as long as wide. The width can be determined by the width of the 13 red and white stripes. The union or star field is the depth of 7 stripes and three-fourths as long as the flag is wide.

A flag with 1-foot-wide stripes (rows of red and white petunias, for instance) would be 13 feet wide by 26 feet long. The field would be 7x10 feet. Make 9 rows for stars horizontally (five rows with 6 stars and four rows of 5 stars) and 11 rows for stars vertically (six rows of 5 stars and five rows of 4 stars). The individual spaces for the 50 stars and background in the 7x10-foot (84x120-inch) field would be approximately 9½x11 inches in size.



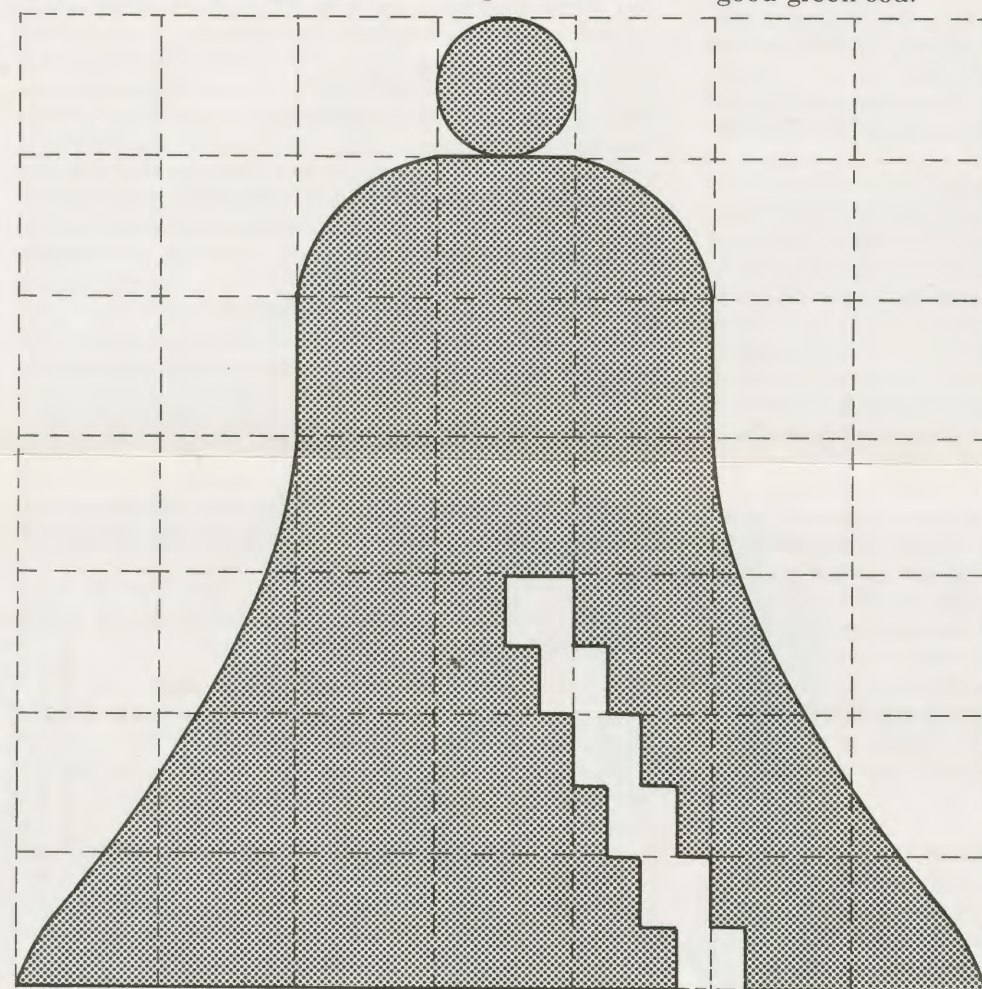
A flag of this size would take 142 red petunias, 126 white petunias, 49 blue petunias and 50 white nicotiana for the stars. Yellow dwarf marigolds could be used for a border (or gold fringe!) if desired. This border would take 132 flowers at 8-inch spacing.

However, it is difficult to maintain separation of colors with 1-foot-wide stripes. An easier way, if space is available, is to use stripes 1½ to 2 feet wide. The flag length and star field would also need to be increased accordingly if this larger plan is followed to keep maintenance at a minimum.

Space for the 50 stars in a 13x26-foot flag is very limited for using petunias. White nicotiana may be used for the stars in this size flag or for a larger 19x39-foot flag. If the flag is increased to a 26x52-foot size, then white petunias could be used for the stars. Another possibility would be to use a circle of 13 stars instead of the regular 50. If the circle is 5 feet in diameter, the flowers "stars" would be spaced 14½ inches apart along the circular pattern. With a circle 10 feet in diameter in a 26x52-foot flag the stars should be spaced 29 inches apart on the circle. With this larger circle, multiflora white petunias could be used.

### 1776-1976 Floral Design

This could be made by using block or squared numerals. The number 1's could be 1 foot wide and 5 feet high. The 6's and the 9 could be 3 feet wide and 5 feet high, leaving a 1-foot square opening. The 7's could be 3 feet wide and 5 feet high. Numerals could be cut out of sod and planted to white petunias. The

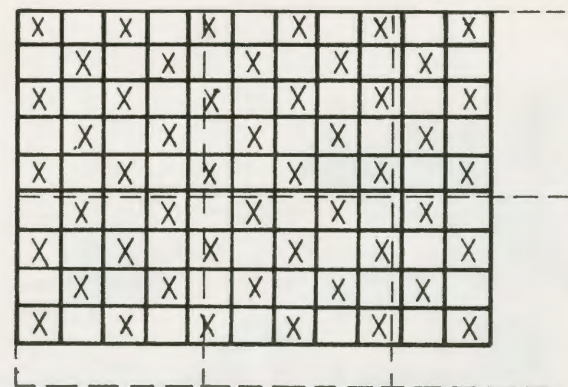


### Liberty Bell Floral Design

The dimensions for a Liberty Bell emblem could be 6 feet high. The top part could be 3 feet wide (start with a 3-foot diameter circle), and then flared or belled out to a 7-foot width at the bottom. The flaring should start 2 to 3 feet below the top of the bell. A circle 1 foot in diameter or a bar of flowers should be made on top of the bell to represent the support. This should be filled with the same type flower as the rest of the bell. Bronze colored dwarf marigolds could be used for the bell. The crack should be about 3 feet long and could be made with yellow dwarf marigolds. This would take about 11½ plants (6 to 8 for the crack). It would be easiest to plant the outline of the bell, bell support and the crack first and then fill in the remainder of the area.

The Liberty Bell can be more effective if it is made larger than the dimensions mentioned above (to a size of 10x10 or 14x14 feet). A planting to represent the support for the bell could replace the circle support above the bell. Yellow dwarf marigolds, used for the crack in the bell, could also be used for the support. Several medium size orange colored zinnia varieties could also be used for the Liberty Bell design.

Dashed squares are to aid you in scaling the size of Liberty Bell you select.



Flag Star Field 10x7 feet (120x84 inches)

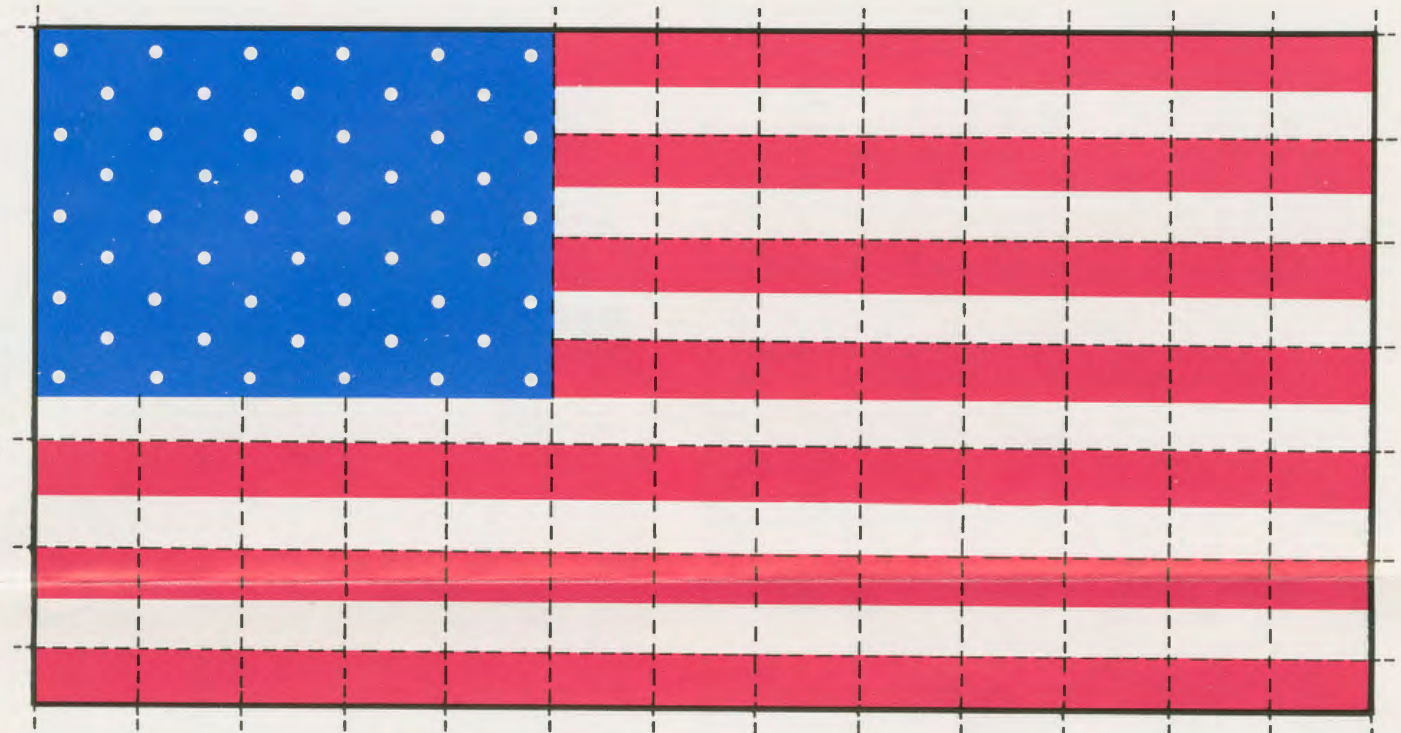
Each square approximately 11x9 inches.

Each broken-line square represents 4 feet or 48 inches.

design could also be made in bare soil. In this case open spaces could be filled in with red or blue petunias. For just the numerals for this size design it would take 68 white petunias. Leave a 2-foot space between the 1-foot wide numerals.

This floral display is more effective if planted in a single line of numbers with 1776 separated from 1976 by a 3-foot long and 1-foot wide "dash" (1776-1976). While multiflora petunias work well for the numerals, the plants may need some shearing to maintain a uniform bright and formal block pattern. The design would be most effective if surrounded by good green sod.

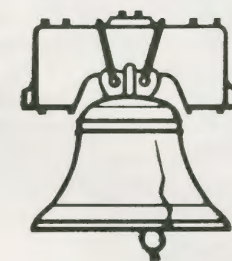
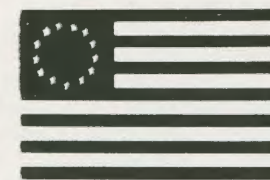
13 feet wide



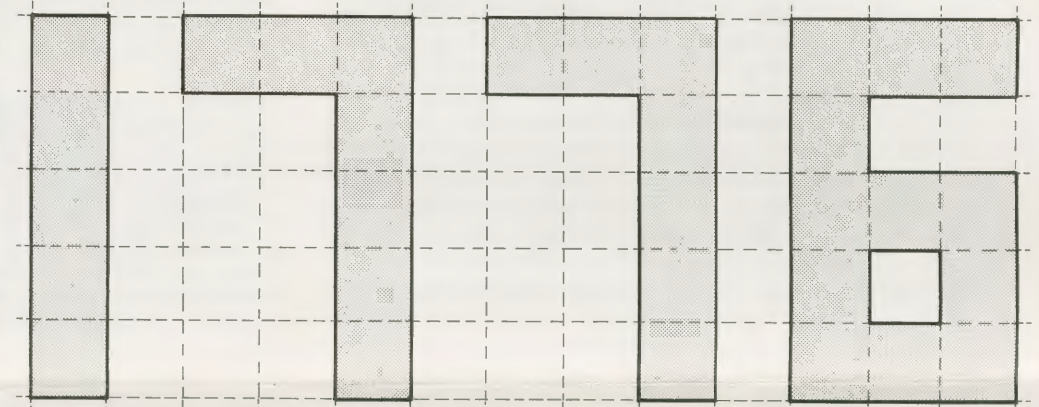
Suggested plantings: blue petunias for field, white flowers for stars white petunias red petunias

Each dashed-line square = 24 inches.

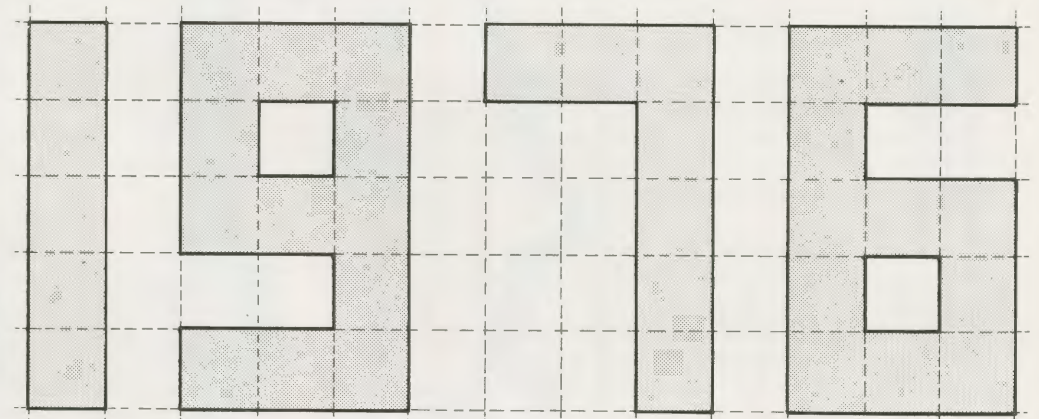
26 feet long



COVER: This is the official logo used in the South Dakota Bicentennial observance.



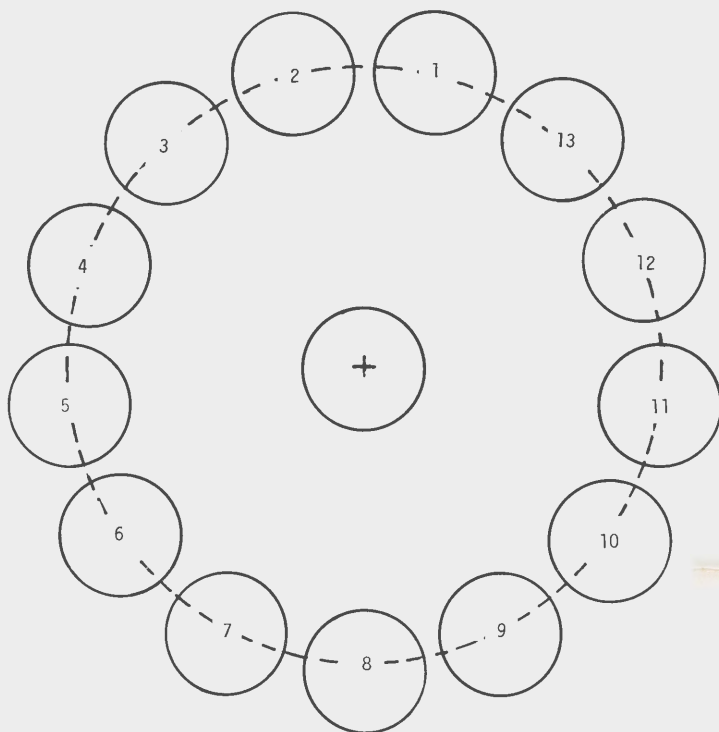
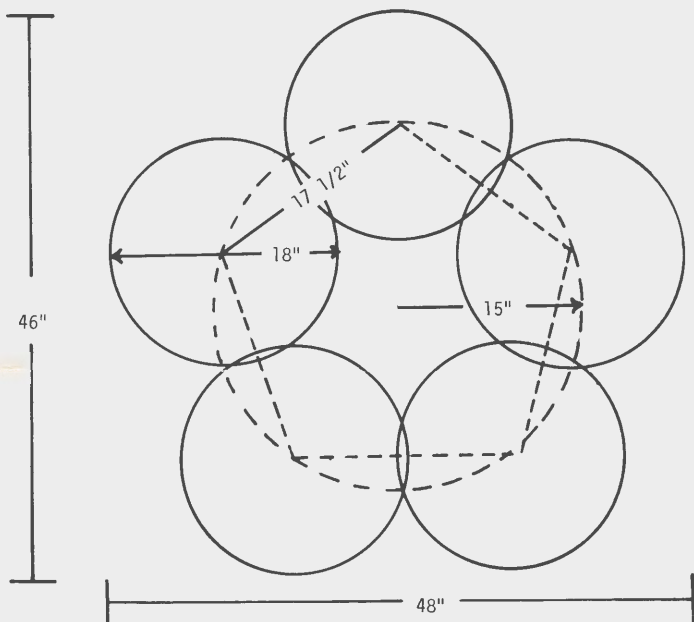
For best display, both dates should be on the same line, separated by a 1x3-foot dash. Allow 2 feet space between the 12- to 18-inch wide numerals.





LAYOUT FOR "MOD" STAR. You can make a mod star in this form, planting the same color of petunias within each of the five circles. Use this as a guide if you make a larger star.

- 1 -- Mark off on ground a 15-inch radius circle (a piece of string with two loops 15 inches apart may be used).
- 2 -- Starting at the top of the circle, mark off points at straight line distances of 17 1/2 inches around the circle. This should give you 5 equally-spaced planting "spots" for the 5 petunia plants forming the "points" of the mod star.



CIRCLE OF 13 STARS. This circle of 5-foot diameter (2 1/2 feet in radius) is for the 7x10-foot star field of a 13x26-foot flag. Space plants 14 1/2 inches apart on the circle. For this size star field use white nicotiana. If you plant a double-size flag (26x52 feet), scale the star distances accordingly and white petunias may be used for the stars.

### Sites for Floral Displays

For best display of the emblems it would be good to plant them on a sloping site. This could be the backslope of a road or highway, some naturally sloping terrain, or a man-made sloping mound in some prominent area of your community. A 30-to 45-degree slope would be most effective for viewing.

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